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News From Our Local Churches - January

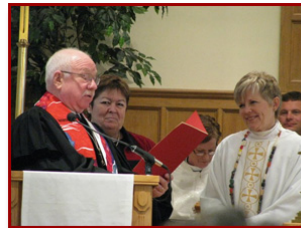


Decatur United Church of Christ Celebrates Affiliation with the UCC!

On Sunday, January 23rd, at the 11:00 service, Decatur United Church of Christ, Decatur, GA, the newest affiliated church in the UCC celebrated its welcome into the UCC. Formerly named Christ Covenant Church, the congregation voted unanimously to adopt its new name several weeks ago as a sign of their new beginning. Conference Minister Tim Downs preached for the occasion, which was also marked by the adult baptism of five new



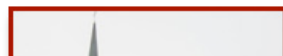
members, and the reception of 10 new members into the church. Established in the early 1990's as a congregation of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Church, the church has had in its history as many as 300 members and as few as 30. While the history of the church has been through ebbs and flows, it has sponsored a new church in Athens, GA, and taken mission trips to Honduras for flood relief. As a part of its commitment to its new denomination, Decatur UCC has pledged 5% of its income to OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) Basic Support, and committed to increase this commitment 1% a year until they reach a title of 10%.



In January 2010, the congregation called Glenna Shepherd, their founding pastor to return as pastor. The church has two associate pastors, Jane Acuff and Kathy Burton. In the last year, they have grown from 30 in worship to an average of 70, and list a membership of 120. The church looks to a vital future of significant mission and growth. Glenna has been a leader and resource in the area of church renewal in the Southeast Conference. Follow link to visit [Decatur Church website](#).



Lanett Congregational Christian Church
Hosts a Worship Service of Farewell and
Thanksgiving





Thanks

On January 16th, Lanett Congregational Christian Church, Lanett, AL, hosted a worship service of farewell as they marked the final step of their disaffiliation from the United Church of Christ, by congregational vote taken on October 31, 2010. Wayde Washburn, newly elected as moderator of the East Alabama-West Georgia Association had approached the church asking whether would welcome representatives of the association, for a service of thanksgiving farewell. Wayde led

the liturgy. Conference Minister Tim Downs preached for the occasion, expressing gratitude on behalf of the conference for the many gifts, which the church had shared with the United Church of Christ over the course of the 44 years of the life of the Conference, which was established in 1966. He noted that the church had been a part of the United Church of Christ and its predecessor bodies for its entire history. Tim thanked the church for the exceptional leadership it had shared with the UCC, not least, of whom included Millard Fuller the founder of Habitat for Humanity and later the Fuller Center for Housing.

Peace Congregational Church Invites You to Participate

An invite is extended to all churches of the SEC to participate in our **First Annual 5k Peace Power Run** on Saturday, April 2. We would like to have runners and walkers, from all over the SEC, participate in the **"Let's Move Campaign."** This 5K run will take place on a certified course in and around beautiful Pendleton, SC. The race is held in conjunction with Pendleton's Spring Jubilee, an open air, juried art show in Pendleton's historic town square. Click [here](#) for more information on the **Peace Power Run** and [registration information](#).



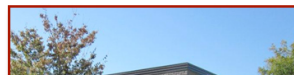
Call for Music Director at Holy Trinity Community Church

There is a vacant part time Music Director position available at Holy Trinity in Nashville. [Click here to view more](#) information about the position and the church.

Pleasant Hill Community UCC Prepares to Move Out of Facility

Having committed to a major renovation and expansion of its facilities, Pleasant Hill Community UCC, TN, held its last service in its old sanctuary on Sunday, January 23rd and plans move. They will relocate to a hall in the Uplands Retirement Village while the renovation of the church is completed. Sunday January 30th the church held a groundbreaking service for the new facility.

Pilgrim Congregational UCC,



Birmingham Prepares for Installation of New Pastor, Janet Weidler

Janet Weidler, recently call to serve, as the pastor of Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Birmingham, will be installed at a worship service at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, February 6th. Janet who has come to the Alabama-Tennessee Association from the Western North Carolina Association of the Southern Conference was raised in Birmingham, and looks forward to leading the church in its continuing path to renewal.



Holy Trinity Community UCC, Nashville in Feasibility Study

Holy Trinity Community UCC Nashville has outgrown its sanctuary. They now have three worship services each Sunday, and are exploring strategies to continue their growth while remaining in the same facility. They have contracted with architects, and are now in the midst of a feasibility study to determine whether they can build a new sanctuary that will seat 400 people, and expand their educational wing to accommodate a growing church school.

Jubilee Circle! United Church of Christ Receives Grant

Jubilee Circle! UCC, a new church start in Columbia, SC, has received a grant for \$8,000 to provide their pastor, Candace Chellew benefits in 2011. This grant was made available in collaboration with the United Church of Christ Pension Boards and Local Church Ministries.

Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson Receives Grant for 2011

Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson, SC had received a grant for \$15,000 for the year 2011 from Local Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ. The church is in the final phases of preparation to apply for status as a church in full standing in the United Church of Christ. Led by Pastor Susie Smith, Peace Congregational UCC has grown rapidly attracting membership through its courageous and visionary mission focused on environmental priorities, and lifting up values of inclusivity and welcome for all.

Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta, Received Grant for \$15,000

Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta, celebrates not only receiving a grant of \$15,000 for the year 2011 from Local Church Ministries of the UCC, but it has moved into an expanded worship space to accommodate its growth. Kirkwood UCC, led by Pastor Susannah Davis, has been a church, which is generating a number of candidates for ministry for the United Church of Christ inspired by its vision and generativity.

United Congregational Church, UCC, Columbus, GA Leaves Building to Historic Foundation

The United Congregational Church, UCC, in Columbus GA, in the next several weeks will turn its church building over to the Columbus Historic Foundation, which has committed to invest \$80,000 to renovate the building for use as its offices and as a community center. Jim Johnson, the current pastor of the congregation, which has a membership of seven people who worship occasionally in one another's homes and in a Burger King. The Rev. H.W. Elder, who with his family built a total of 24 churches up and down the Chattahoochee valley, founded the church in 1903 with 18 charter members.

It has been difficult for Rev. Johnson, who is an electrical engineer to maintain the building and to protect it from vandalism. Several years ago, the parsonage behind the building was burned down, copper wiring has been stripped out of the church building, and windows have been broken. Conference Minister Tim Downs said, "This is an example of a UCC church imbued with a sense of mission and service at its best. Having served a community faithfully for generations, the church is giving its building to a foundation which in turn is committed to serve the community".

Follow this link for more information on [United Congregational Church](#).

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Welcome to the Southeast

Saturday, 26 Feb 2011



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Lifting Up. . . January



A little bit of information about Rev. Sales -



Rev. Dr. Dick Sales, retired missionary and active member of the UCC who currently lives in Birmingham, Alabama with his wife Nancy, spent much of his career strengthening the church through theological education for lay and ordained leaders in Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and, upon his "first" retirement, throughout the Southeast Conference. Literally thousands of pastors and lay men and women have been equipped for ministries within the church and the world because of their involvement in programs such

as TAP and TEE. TEE programs begun by Dr. Sales continue to thrive and to grow throughout Southern Africa, as well as here in the SEC.

[Click her to read more](#) about Dick Sales and the 200th Anniversary of Global Missions.

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Director of Music Ministry

Holy Trinity Community Church, UCC

Job Description

Purpose Statement: To develop, coordinate and administer effective, well-rounded music ministries at Holy Trinity and provide leadership and supervision of professionals and volunteers involved in those ministries.

Reports to: Senior Pastor

Specific Duties:

- Plans and implements appropriate music for Sunday worship services, and for other special services as required, after consulting with Senior Pastor regarding theme.
- Facilitates the congregation's participation in authentic worship.
- Recruits, develops, mentors, and rehearses volunteer members of the church choir(s), worship teams, and band(s) as applicable.
- Fosters good communication and a strong sense of community among all musicians and vocalists.
- Facilitates the integration of worship teams and music throughout the church (children, youth, adults).
- Plans and produces special musical concerts and/or workshops (examples: fundraiser, talent show, coffee house, Christmas concert). Occasionally contracts with guest musicians to provide special music as necessary. Accompanies and rehearses with guests as needed.
- Coordinates with sound, video, & lighting technicians weekly to plan for worship A/V and lighting requirements. Identifies A/V volunteer training needs and initiates that training.
- Participates in all scheduled staff meetings and staff development times. (Staff meetings are currently scheduled the 2nd & 4th Sunday of each month immediately following the last worship service.)
- Facilitates and/or performs administrative efforts required for all duties.
- Provides immediate supervision, direction, and performance appraisals for other paid worship staff (i.e., Assistant Music Director, Sound Technician) other than the Senior Pastor.
- Actively interacts with and serves on the Worship Team (comprised of Music, Drama, A/V, Pastor, and usher representatives) and Special Events Team.
- Develops an annual worship ministry plan and budget along with the Senior Pastor. Provides budget requests to Vestry Treasurer and Senior Pastor annually.
- Selects, purchases, maintains, and catalogues music resources and sound equipment, within budget guidelines and restrictions. Provides receipts and other tracking of expenditures to the church accountant.

Required Education & Experience:

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in music or 5 years related experience.
- Prefer Experience in:
 - leading congregational worship

- building & leading worship teams (vocalists & instrumentalists)
- building & directing worship choirs
- arranging music for vocals & band
- accompanying vocals and congregational worship
- singing solos and harmonies.

Required Knowledge & Abilities:

- Ability to play instruments to accompany congregational worship. (preferably piano and guitar).
- Ability to read and write musical arrangements.
- Ability to perform and lead various styles of music.
- Ability to recruit, work with, raise up and inspire lay-leaders and teams of volunteers. Ability to create and sustain a strong volunteer culture within a church music ministry.
- High level of overall musicianship.
- Ability to plan, prioritize and manage multiple tasks.
- Ability to communicate effectively and motivate others to accomplish common goals.
- Ability to work independently to accomplish tasks without direction.
- Ability to work cooperatively in a team environment.

Other Requirements:

- Deep commitment to Jesus Christ and a genuine love for worship & Christ's body, the church.
- Demonstrates a Christ-like attitude in performing work and dealing with interpersonal situations.
- Committed to the community of Holy Trinity Community Church and in agreement with Holy Trinity's Statement of Faith and Leadership Covenant.
- Successful completion of background check per the Holy Trinity Safe Church Policy.
- Commitment to spiritual integrity and artistic excellence.

Work Schedule: This is a part time, 20 hours per week position to include at least 5 hours each Sunday. (Holy Trinity currently has three Sunday worship services each week at 8:55, 10:15, and 11:35AM.) Additionally, the person filling this position will attend a one hour staff meeting twice a month and will likely spend 3-5 hours each week in choir, band, and/or worship team rehearsals and planning. The schedule for the remaining hours is flexible and will be discussed and determined by the Senior Pastor and the candidate filling the position.



Peace Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
in Clemson, South Carolina invites you to participate in our
first annual 5K Peace Power Run.



Date: Saturday, April 2, 2011 at 9:00 AM
Location: Veteran's Park in Pendleton, SC
Corner of Long Drive and Oak Street.

This 5K run will take place on a certified course in and around beautiful Pendleton SC.
The race is held in conjunction with Pendleton's Spring Jubilee,
an open air, juried art show in Pendleton's historic town square.

Registration Onsite will begin at 7:30 AM.

To register online go to: http://www.active.com/event_detail.cfm?

For more information contact: peace.power.run@gmail.com

Or Nancy King at nking814@gmail.com or Maria Mayorga at mayorga@clemson.edu

Beneficiaries of the Race

Mary's House, Hunters Store, and Peace Congregational Church, UCC.

Mary's House is a Domestic Violence shelter for the Pickens County area. This nonprofit organization is a collaboration between local churches, law enforcement, businesses and community agencies to provide a shelter for the women who suffer at the hands of a violent partner. The purpose of Mary's house is to provide immediate safety in the short term for the women and their children who are caught in the trauma of domestic violence. Mary's House will also provide rehabilitation, education, and longer-term support to families whose lives have been shattered by domestic violence.

Hunter's Store on the square in Pendleton, SC was built in 1850. It now serves as the headquarters for the Pendleton District Commission, a regional tourism promotion and historical services organization for Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties. Funds are being raised to help restore this historic location.

Peace Congregational Church, United Church of Christ was begun three years ago by the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. It is the only UCC Congregation in the Upstate of South Carolina. It's Mission is to be a community of hope that proclaims God's extravagant welcome, embodies the radical love of Jesus, honors the interconnectedness of our lives with creation and empowers all people to grow toward wholeness. Go to www.thepeacechurch.org for more information about the church or contact Pastor Susie Smith at 864.634.4205 or clemsonucc@gmail.com.



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Feature Focus - January 2011



Something's Happening Here... by Rev.

Tim Downs

I have been intrigued by the literature having to do with the seismic shifts that are taking place in mainline denominationalism. Phyllis Tickle writes that the emergent church is as significant as the Reformation was in reshaping the church. Diana Butler Bass is suggesting that we are well into the fourth great awakening in American history, a massive cultural reorientation during which "dysfunctional... beliefs and behaviors are replaced by a 'new sense of reality, identity and of self-confidence.'" Brian McLaren and Doug Pagitt, of the emergent church movement are writing similarly about epical shifts in church life. There is something happening here, and it is beginning to have a dramatic impact on our lives

together in the United Church of Christ.

Where Do We See These Changes? We see it first, in the changing nature and shape of our local churches. Here in the Southeast Conference we have, as I have often said, gone from 138 churches to 50 churches in the last half century. The churches we have lost are largely small, rural and small town congregations, most, but not, all ethnically Euro-American. At the same time, our Conference has doubled in numbers of members, and has over 20 churches, largely in urban area new to us in the last decade and a half. We have become majority African-American.

At the local church level, our most rapidly growing churches are those that are proudly and unapologetically United Church of Christ. There is a growing diversity of styles of worship and music, a growing diversity in ages, ethnic backgrounds, family structures, and an increasing number of opening and affirming churches.

UCC News

UCC Newsroom

Headlines from the United Church of Christ

UCC, Disciples engage issues of immigration policy, border ministry

Inspired by the theme "Turning Walls Into Tables," constituents of the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) met Feb. 10-13 at Iglesia Cristiana Casa De Oracion in San Diego for a border conference to dialogue about immigration policies and border ministry.



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At the national denominational level, we have seen a hemorrhage of staff positions, a decline of financial support flowing to the national setting, and a significant restructure to accommodate the diminishing of resources.

The church that is taking shape around us is a church that is more missional, is more readily engaged in the work of justice, is more innovative and adaptive, and experiments with new shapes of being church to meeting the changing needs of the communities we are called to serve.

In a recent lecture by Diana Butler Bass, she began with three questions. Why is my church so stuck? Why are a handful of churches succeeding? Why are most of the churches unable to move? She noted that there are signs of system failure in every major institution and the church is not exempt from these failures. As religious systems fail, people are immobilized by fear, and churches often respond by becoming quarrelsome, judgmental, and rigid. She adds that the 20th century is over, and there is little left to fix. We are challenged to find something completely different. What we have here is not an end but a beginning.

Ms. Bass then turns to the work of an author named William McLaughlin who writes of this time as a fourth great awakening. An awakening he says is the result of a critical cultural distortion and distress that result in a basis restructuring of an institution. He then lines out the steps of an awakening.

They are:

- **A Crisis of Legitimacy:** This crisis results in individuals losing their bearings; rising violence, psychosis, family breakdown.
- **Cultural Distortion:** People conclude that their problems are not personal, but are the result of institutional dysfunction. Often nativist, traditionalist movements rise (think Tea Party here), people resist change and seek a return to old ways.
- **Appearance of a New Vision:** Individuals rise up who articulate a new way of being, new insights, and new understandings of identity, new moral and ethical possibilities. They act as prophets of the new way faithful to what has gone before.
- **Attraction:** Some people begin to "get it" and reorder their lives according to the new way of life articulated by the prophets. Revivals and conversions often mark this stage.
- **Transformation (Revitalization):** Moderates, "undecided" accept the new vision and behaviors. There is a revisioning of institutions, reorganized communities, and changes in family structures. It should be noted, that this progression is not inevitable, and in the face of strong resistance, transformation may not take place.

So What? This is the question upon which any good lecture or sermon hinges. If we cannot answer it clearly, we have not made our case. I believe that if we in the United Church of Christ are true to our values and our origins, we will be a denomination that is uniquely poised to be the faith community for those accepting the new vision. Why? Because Butler Bass suggest these are the values that will be coming:

- **Global Community.** The old borders between nations and group are rapidly crumbling under the impact of rapidly changing technologies
- **Religious Pluralism.** Faith traditions are co-existing in the same cultural spaces, and the old dogmatic and sectarianism will begin to fade
- **Caring for One Another.** Old systems of family networks are crumbling as noted, and we are finding new configurations of relationships
- **Environment.** In spite of resistance to the mounting evidence, many are increasingly alarmed by our deteriorating environment and moved to action
- **Humane Economic Systems.** People have been trampled by economic systems that exist for the perpetuation of power through political structures of many persuasions.

There are many models of more accessible and humane economic structures beginning to emerge.

I look at those values and say, “these values resemble our values as a church in the United Church of Christ.” These are exciting times for us. I hope you will join me in celebrating the growing diversity of churches, and the ways in which they worship, serve and witness in the Southeast Conference.

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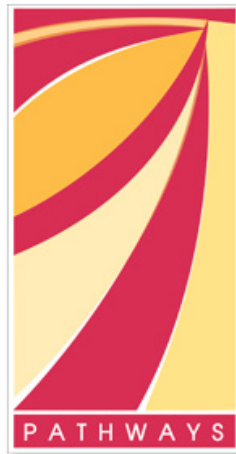
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Conference News - January



OCWM 2010 Remains Stable

As the Southeast Conference closes its books on 2010, we report that our OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) Basic Support for 2010 is **\$285,000** up \$8500 from 2009. ***We are deeply grateful to our local congregations for their continuing support and affirmation of our ministries together, particularly in these challenging times.*** A fuller report will be forthcoming.



A New Partnership with Lancaster Theological Seminary and the CPR to Train for Ministry

Over the last several months, the conference has been developing a vision for a four-year program of preparing people for ministry guided by the Ministry Issues Pronouncement Implementation. This program will begin to take the place of the TAP program over the next several years. Named "Pathways", this program will provide two year training for lay leaders, three years for licensed ministers and four years for candidate on the path to ordination. Pathways is being developed in collaboration with Lancaster Theological Seminary and the Center for Progressive Renewal. Over the last few months, Kathy Clark and Tim Downs have been making presentations in national settings to leadership in other conferences. During the spring,

we will be testing technologies, writing grants, and developing relationships with conferences, which might be interested in working with us. It is our hope to launch this new endeavor in the fall of 2011.

Global Theological Education Participants Return

Our group of eight sturdy world travelers who are a part of the Global Theological Education program of the Southeast Conference in collaboration with Lancaster Theological Seminary returned to Atlanta on January 26. By all accounts, they had a stimulating engagement with interfaith conversations, conversations with our ecumenical partners The Church of Christ in Thailand, visits to Burmese refugee camps, and conversations about peace making. We understand there were also interesting encounters with elephants and unanticipated swims in rivers... stay tuned for more information in the next communication!



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UCCOSSN Annual Meeting

The supporting hands of the on-going ministries of the United Church of Christ is holding its 2011 Annual Meeting "Go Tell It On the Mountains." The meeting, hosted by **First Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC** | North Conway, NH will be April 28-May 1. We are the **Office Support Staff** from local churches, conferences and national agencies and instrumentalities. We look forward to meeting with you this April. Follow the links below for additional event information.

- [UCCOSSN 2011 Annual Meeting Flyer](#)
- [UCCOSSN 2011 Annual Meeting Hotel Reservation](#)
- [UCCOSSN 2011 Annual Meeting Registration Form](#)



Freshening Up for 2011!

The Campaign Steering Committee continues visiting churches to say THANK YOU . . . for their financial pledge.

This *Transforming Churches* -

Transforming Lives Campaign is ALL ABOUT the churches; our churches of the wonderful Southeast Conference.

Whether big churches or small....the goal is the same; to expand mission and ministry in the Southeast Conference. Read on and see what visits to LaFayette, AL and Athens, AL were all about.

Winter Wonders - "Peace Makers: Nurturing Peace Within"

Youth from 6th through 12th grades braved the elements and traveled across the Southern and Southeast Conferences to meet in Blowing Rock, North Carolina the weekend of January 14-17. A record breaking week of winter snow fall did not keep these youth at home.



The Annual Winter Youth Retreat hosted



200+ youth and adults from across the Southern and Southeast Conferences enjoyed fun in the snow and met loads of new friends from other UCC churches.

Peacemakers: Nurturing Peace Within was the the theme for this year's

conference. The weekend provided an opportunity for creating new friendships, enjoying the snow, getting some exercise, eating fabulous food, spiritual growth and life changing conversation. The Rev. Da Vita D. McCallister was our session leader and facilitated our time around being ***Peacemakers: Nurturing Peace Within. Texting just expanded even more!*** Watch for a more indepth insider report coming next month.

SEC and CPR Collaborate in Online Course Offering

Tim Downs will be leading the second online UCC history and polity class beginning on February 26th and ending April 30th. The class, which is a comprehensive overview of the United Church of Christ, will meet the history and polity requirements for candidates seeking authorization for ministry in the UNITED Church of Christ. A recent graduate of the class remarked, “It was the best class I have had online, and I recommend it as a way to get to know the denomination. The interaction among the class members was very meaningful, and the instructors were excellent”. You can register by going to www.progressiverenewal.org; click on the Online Learning Center and on to Course offerings. The course tuition is \$500.

Other Online Courses (5 weeks) being offered through the Center Progressive Renewal this February:

> Dynamic Leadership in the Smaller Membership Church - This five week course will explore theologies of size and how to shape thriving, faithful ministries in smaller congregations (typically defined as having a worship average attendance of less than 100). The course will be led by **Rev. Elizabeth Dilley**, pastor of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Red Oak, Iowa. For more information [visit progressiverenewal.org](http://visitprogressiverenewal.org).

> Using Appreciative Inquiry Tools to Lead Change - In this five week course participants will be walked through a practical approach to using the tools of Appreciative Inquiry to lead change in their setting. This process can benefit any congregation, but particularly new congregations, congregations in transition, and churches looking to make the next step in growth. This course will be led by **Rev. Gregg Carlson**, a UCC Minister and Director of Online Learning for the Center for Progressive Renewal. For more information [visit progressiverenewal.org](http://visitprogressiverenewal.org).

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Celebrations - January 2011



Michelle Calderon, recently approved as ordainable pending a call by the Georgia South Carolina Association will be ordained into Christian ministry at Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, on February 13th at 4:00.



Michael Piazza, formerly the pastor of Cathedral of Hope in Dallas, TX, the third largest congregation in the United Church of Christ preached a candidating sermon at Virginia Highland Church (A Baptist and UCC Congregation), Atlanta, on January 21st. The church unanimously elected to call him as their pastor. Michael will begin his ministry in Atlanta in March. He is also Executive Director of Church Multiplication with the Center of Progressive Renewal.

Congratulations to **Christy Bonner**, a chaplain at Hospice of Chattanooga, and member of Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Chattanooga, who announced that she was married on December 11th.

Lillian Hallstrand Strahine, recently ordained, member of Brookmeade Congregational UCC, and a chaplain at Vanderbilt Hospital, is being featured on a television show, "Issues of Faith" on News Channel 5+ in Nashville, speaking about the importance of hospital chaplaincy.

UCC News

UCC Newsroom

Headlines from the United Church of Christ

UCC, Disciples engage issues of immigration policy, border ministry

Inspired by the theme "Turning Walls Into Tables," constituents of the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) met Feb. 10-13 at Iglesia Cristiana Casa De Oracion in San Diego for a border conference to dialogue about immigration policies and border ministry.



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Thank You!

The Transforming Churches – Transforming Lives Campaign

continues in 2011 to accept pledges from various churches, large and small, across the Conference. We have several churches who have made commitments to the campaign but have not decided on a pledge level. We have other churches who tell us they still are in a process of "discernment."



Pleasant Hill Community Church United Church of Christ has just finished their Combined Campaign for their local church needs and the Conference. They have generously committed a minimum of \$75,000 to the Conference Campaign. Rev. Lyle Weible, Pleasant Hill's Campaign Chair has shared their experience as follows:

Tithing for Transformation



Pleasant Hill (TN) Community Church UCC received the introduction to the Southeast Conference capital campaign when it was in the early stages of considering its own building expansion campaign. The result was a combined or "wraparound" campaign. The Case Statement for PHCC UCC's "Affirming the Mission" campaign affirmed:

"Combining the Southeast Conference campaign within our own PHCC UCC campaign is not only practical; it is also consistent with a primary commitment of our congregation: ministry beyond ourselves."

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The result is a commitment to tithe 10% of its undesignated campaign gifts to the SEC capital campaign. The congregation was challenged to accept a Basic Goal of \$68,000. Instead, the pledge made was for “\$75,000 ... and we hope to exceed that amount.”

**Affirming the Mission and Transforming Churches-Transforming Lives
fit together well.**

Here are stories from a variety of other churches across the Southeast Conference.

Barbara Everett Travels to Sandy Creek United Church of Christ

What a privilege it was to worship with **Sandy Creek United Church of Christ** and thank them for their generous financial support for the Southeast Conference Campaign, Transforming Churches-Transforming Lives. I was excited to have the



opportunity to see Louise Cox and others whom I have known for so many years and who have been such important mentors to me. The relationships we have formed through countless Conference meetings and women's retreats have sustained us through some

difficult times including the sorrow when some churches in Alabama and west Georgia decided to withdraw from the United Church of Christ.

Some, like Louise, had to choose between remaining members of the churches where they had spent their entire lives but to do so would mean severing the ties with friends around the UCC, or remaining part of the UCC by starting a new church. They chose to remain part of the United Church of Christ and as a result Sandy Creek UCC was born.

This small congregation is a vital and welcoming community of faith. I met several new members—new to Sandy Creek and new to the UCC and each one told of their love for this community through which they have experienced the love of God as never before. Under the leadership of the Rev. Wayde Washburn, this is a church transformed and one that is transforming lives. I thank God that they are a part of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Written by Barbara Everett, former Moderator of the Southeast Conference and member of the Campaign Steering Committee

Barbara Everett Enjoys Thanksgiving with Trinity Congregational

Trinity Congregational, United Church of Christ in Athens, Alabama is one of our



historic churches founded by the American Missionary Association nearly 140 years ago. It has been a constant and committed part of the UCC family in the Southeast. It is a rare conference or association meeting that does not have a delegation from Trinity, Athens in attendance and I cannot remember a single regional women's meeting that was not made richer by the participation of sisters from Trinity.

Therefore, it was an honor to worship at Trinity the Sunday before Thanksgiving. I

had the chance to thank them for their generous commitment of financial



support for the Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives Campaign that will strengthen the mission and ministry of the Southeast Conference well into the future.



Under the leadership of The Reverend Gary Myers, this historic congregation continues the legacy of prior generations of African Americans who valued the distinctive witness of the United Church of Christ and who have committed themselves to extending and expanding that witness into the future.

Written by Barbara Everett, Former Moderator of the Southeast Conference and member of the Campaign Steering Committee.

Ginnie Nixon, Moderator of the SEC Conference, Traveled to Knoxville



"I was warmly greeted at **Church of the Savior, UCC**, in Knoxville, Tennessee, where the work of the Southeast Conference and the national UCC are well-known." The church used conference resources to facilitate a visioning renewal program, and it also has hosted both Alabama-Tennessee Association and Conference meetings. Their minister, Rev. John Gill, serves on both the Southeast Conference Board and the Board of the national UCC Justice and Witness Ministries. Both he and the Assistant Minister, Rev. Leslie

Etheredge, lead the church in active participation in local justice and witness projects. It was my pleasure to recognize the congregation's generous support of \$40,000 pledged to the Transforming Churches; Transforming Lives Campaign.



Debbie Spearman Visited with Pilgrim Congregational UCC

Campaign Follow up Director, Debbie Spearman traveled to thank **Pilgrim Congregational UCC** in Birmingham for their pledge to the Transforming Churches-Transforming Lives Campaign. Pilgrim pledged \$5,225 to the campaign. Accepting the



certificate of thanks, was new senior minister, Janet Weidler. Worshiping together in their new church on 6th Avenue South in Birmingham was a special treat. Conference minister, Dr. Timothy Downs joined in for fellowship time after the worship service. Debbie commented, "the next time you are in Birmingham be sure to drive over to 6th Avenue South and view Pilgrim's beautiful new church home." *Everyone is welcome!*

Rev. Tim Downs Visited with First Birmingham Congregational UCC

October 24, Conference Minister Tim Downs worshiped with **First Birmingham**. In appreciation of their pledge of \$24,000 to the Conference Campaign, Dr. Downs

presented Rev. Dr. Rodney Franklin, pastor of First Birmingham, with a Certificate of Thanks, for their support. Many thanks to Birmingham First for their generous pledge.”

*“Whoever you
are,
wherever you are
on life’s journey,
you are welcome
here”*



**Deer Lodge Congregational Church UCC
Greated Ginnie Nixon**

Ginnie had the pleasure of awarding Deer Lodge Congreagational Church United Church of Christ a plaque of appreciation. Deer Lodge was one of the very first congregations to make their pledge to the campaign. Deer Lodge is a small church that has been serving this rural community on the Cumberland Plateau since it was a



thriving coal-mining center. This multi-generational family church has already paid its pledge of \$5,000 to the Transforming Churches; Transforming Lives Campaign. I was greeted warmly by Moderator Farrell Kennedy and Pastor Rose Hermanot who both expressed their support for the mission and ministry of the Southeast Conference and their appreciation of both the award and visit.

Traveling East on I-20 from Atlanta was Debbie Spearman Conference Follow-up Director for the Campaign, visited the relatively new church to the Southeast Conference Columbia Garden of Grace UCC. Her purpose on that November Sunday was to thank them for their generous pledge of \$20,000 to the Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives campaign. This church that is small and growing voted UNANIMOUSLY to support the Conference Campaign. Andy Sidden, Pastor of



Garden of Grace states that they will conduct a 5 year joint campaign in their local church, meaning they will raise money to pay off their mortgage and 1/5 of what is raised will



be pledged to the Conference Campaign. Thank

you Garden of Grace. To read more about Garden of Grace's decision, use the link below: [Ready for Ministry Which God is Leading](#).

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Ready for Ministry which God is Leading

A sense of belonging to a capital campaign that focused on much more than brick and mortar excited the people of Garden of Grace United Church of Christ in Columbia, SC, to vote unanimously to be a part of the UCC Southeast Conference's "Transforming Lives -- Transforming Churches." We did so after Pentecost Sunday covered-dish luncheon in May.

Garden of Grace realized, too, our own need to be ready for more ministry to which God is leading us. We decided to pursue a joint campaign. Our Bodacious Capital Campaign -- bold, remarkable, outstanding and audacious -- is combined with the conference campaign.

We plan to raise \$100,000 with a challenge goal of \$150,000 during the next five years. A fifth of that will go to Transforming Lives -- Transforming Churches. The rest will go to pay down our mortgage. We do not want our mortgage to hold us back from peace and justice ministries in our community and elsewhere.

In 2009 and 2010, we sent missionaries from our church to Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota to repair homes. This led us to raise nearly \$30,000 both years in excess of our operating budget.

We want to be able to say our mortgage for our six-year-old celebration center is no obstacle for future ministries.

We launched our joint campaign on our 17th anniversary Sunday, Aug. 22, and our leaders alone pledged more than \$55,000. The first Transforming Churches -- Transforming Lives money will arrive at the end of September, which is also the month that we give birth to our baby, Jubilee! Circle United Church of Christ in northeastern Richland County. Nine months in the planning, this is a second Columbia-area UCC to be lead by our associate pastor -- now Jubilee's pastor -- the Rev. Candace Chellew-Hodge.

The goal of starting new churches is a strong one for us -- and we are grateful that this is part of Transforming Churches -- Transforming Lives. Quite frankly, we would be far less excited about a denominational headquarters building campaign.

We are honored to be a part of this exciting denomination and conference.

Andy Sidden | Pastor
Garden of Grace United Church of Christ
1020 Atlas Road | Columbia, SC 29209